

# Harvard Square, MA deploys free public WiFi

- ▶ 24 Meraki APs provide free wireless for 8 million yearly visitors across 24 acres of public space
- ▶ Fast and cable-free deployment limits disruption of local businesses
- ▶ Free WiFi drives local foot traffic and has a “significant impact” on the collective community
- ▶ Click-through splash page directs users to [www.harvardsquare.com](http://www.harvardsquare.com), creating opportunities for engagement

Harvard Square is the bustling hub of the City of Cambridge. Home to both Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, it features bookstores, boutique shops, theaters, coffeehouses and restaurants, as well as public open space. Over 8 million visitors flock to the square every year.

“The Harvard Square Business Association thought that free public WiFi would be a wonderful accommodation for visitors, students, and residents, while also driving internet traffic to [www.harvardsquare.com](http://www.harvardsquare.com) which features a daily calendar of events and information about local businesses,” said Denise Jillson, Executive Director of the association.

Jillson spent two years researching possible WiFi solutions when finally, a networking consultant walked in carrying a Meraki access point and said he’d found the answer.

“I thought, there’s no way that little thing could transmit everywhere,” Jillson recalled. “But, at only a few hundred dollars each, we could buy 30 or so and if they worked, great. If not, we wouldn’t have invested as much compared to other options, which would cost us several hundred thousand dollars.”

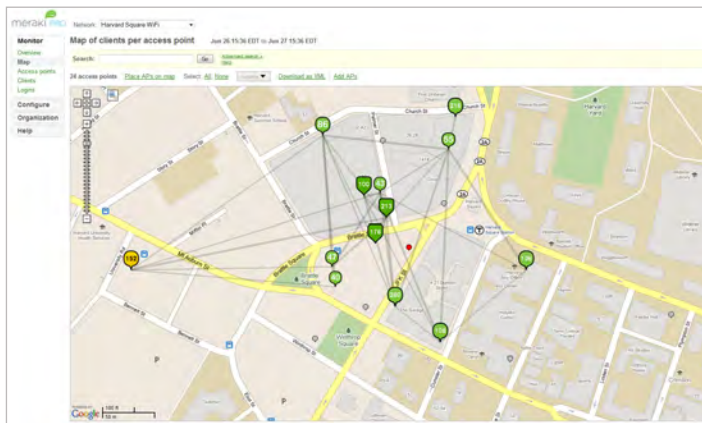
Jillson ordered two dozen Meraki access points and hired local networking company Anaptyx ([www.anaptyx.com](http://www.anaptyx.com)) to deploy them over the course of three days. “It worked immediately, and it has worked ever since,” she said. “People are delighted with the service.”

Over 11,000 clients transfer approximately 60GB every month, joining the open network through a click-through splash page.

“It’s so nice to sit here in my office, see people outside in cafes, or just sitting outside, hanging out, online with their laptops, having fun. It’s exactly what we were looking for. Without any bumps in the road,” Jillson said. “There has not been a technical innovation spearheaded by the Harvard Square Business Association with as significant an impact to the collective community as Meraki.”

*“It’s been an incredibly easy and affordable solution. Meraki should be a model for any community. It works and has exceeded our highest expectations!”*

*- Denise Jillson, Executive Director,  
Harvard Square Business Association*



Meraki APs across Harvard Square are managed via the Meraki dashboard.